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TELEGRAM

June 02, 2004

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Subject: UAE TO REBUT ICFTU CAMEL JOCKEY REPORT AT ILO GENEVA
CONVENTION
Ref: None

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FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 4600
INFO RUEHDE/AMCONSUL DUBAI 4045
RUCPDOC/USDOC WASHDC
RUEHC/DEPT OF LABOR WASHDC
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RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 0548

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STATE FOR NEA/ARP, NEA/RA, DRL AND EB/CBA
STATE PASS OPIC/OPIC INTERNATIONAL POLICY DEPARTMENT FOR
VIRGINIA GREEN AND CONSTANCE SHINN
STATE PASS USTR JASON BUNTIN, DOUG BELL
USDOC FOR ITA/MAC

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [ELAB](#) [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [SOCI](#) [CVIS](#) [GTIP](#) [TC](#)
SUBJECT: UAE TO REBUT ICFTU CAMEL JOCKEY REPORT AT ILO GENEVA
CONVENTION

1. SUMMARY: During this week's ILO 92nd Session in Geneva, the UAE Minister of Labor and Social Affairs will rebut allegations that the UAE is not doing enough to curb the employment of underage foreign boys as camel jockeys. The UAEG will use the forum to highlight the UAE's progress over the year in fighting all forms of human trafficking. END SUMMARY.

2. The local press reported on May 30 that the UAE delegation to

the ILO's 92nd Session, set to begin June 1 in Geneva, will challenge ILO accusations that the UAE continues to employ underage foreign boys as camel jockeys. The delegation, led by the Minister of Labor and Social Affairs Matar Humaid Al Tayer, will also use the forum to highlight the UAE's commitment to combat this and all other forms of human trafficking. He will rebut a report submitted by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) to the ILO last year that alleges that the practice is still common in the UAE. According to the MOL, the ICFTU report was based on outdated information and did not reflect the many measures the Ministry of Interior (MOI) took to address this issue.

¶3. Al Tayer will discuss the requirement, which was implemented in January 2003, for DNA testing on all camel jockeys and their claimed parents to prove the family relationship. If the test is refused, the residency visa is denied. If the DNA evidence refutes the claim of parentage, the false "parents" are prosecuted and the boy is humanely repatriated to his home country. The MOI claims that, since the inception of the DNA requirement, the number of camel jockey violations has decreased by 50 percent, and the number continues to decline dramatically. The media report said that the UAEG provided evidence of this decline to the ILO.

¶4. In addition to DNA testing, the delegation will discuss other measures adopted by the UAE to eradicate this form of child trafficking. Increased communication between the MOI and UAE Embassies in jockey-exporting countries has contributed to the rapid decline in the number of violations. Before jockeys are permitted to race camels, a medical committee performs tests to ensure that they are medically fit and at least 15 years old, as stated in their passports. Identification cards for all jockeys, required at all races and inspected by police at all racetracks, are not issued without medical committee approval. Stable owners sponsoring the camel jockeys must pay for the repatriation of all candidates the committee determines are younger than 15 or unfit to race. Further, the MOI has proposed a law to penalize camel jockey traffickers. The Ministry of Justice, Islamic Affairs and Awqaf (MOJ) is finalizing the law, and will forward it to the Cabinet for approval.

WAHBA